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AUTHOR	Garcia, Ruth Fran
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ABSTRACT

This study examined the attitudes of fifth and sixth grade students from Chicago (Illinois) toward classroom climate in an effort to better understand factors that would encourage greater self-concept, higher achievement, and student and teacher behaviors. The study population included 185 fifth and sixth grade students attending the Philip Sheridan Elementary School in Chicago. The students were from low-income families in an area of depleted jobs and much gang activity. The students were African American and Hispanic American, and 50 students were in Spanish/English bilingual classrooms with a bilingual teacher. The 60-item Classroom Climate Checklist (CCC) was administered to students over a 2-day period. A short oral explanation was given by the researcher, and the CCC was administered and collected immediately on completion. Findings indicate that of the three items rated as strong positive aspects of classroom climate, two are teacher-directed or teacher-caused: the teacher makes the subjects interesting (72 percent), and the students are encouraged to ask questions (72 percent). The third highest-rated positive item was a reflection of the students themselves in helping each other to do a good job. Teacher behavior also figured greatly in the positive response. Two item considered as factors of poor climate were negated by student responses. Includes 1 table, the CCC, and 28 references. (JB)

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STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CLASSROOM CLIMATE

A DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH STUDY

Ruth Fran Garcia

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Research studies suggest that school climate is one of the major correlates of effective schools. An effective school is one where everyone feels free from bodily harm and where there exists a safe and orderly atmosphere. There is a discipline code, rules and regulations regarding behavior, students' rights and responsibilities are clearly delineated, enforcement of the rules is fair and consistent, and all members of the school are well informed. The effective school maintains a pleasant, attractive, and clean physical appearance. These aspects of the school have at times been defined as the school culture. The nature of the school culture extends to a sense of pride in the school, a sense of responsibility, and all the activities that involve all members to sustain and enhance the quality of school life and its organizational health. The school reform movement actively promotes the establishment of a "vision" whereby the mission, goals and objectives of each school are firmly established and permeate every aspect of the school environment.

The classroom then becomes the climate, an essential part of the entire school culture. The classroom climate can thus be a measure of the more complex school culture, each influencing and affecting the other.

It has been argued that improvements to the school culture may require long periods of time, while improvements to some factors of the classroom climate can begin immediately. These factors might be student discipline practices, classroom management, teacher effectiveeness, and the interrelationships between teacher and student and among students. Periodic assessment of the classroom climate can indicate strengths which can be replicated in other classrooms, or weaknesses that need correction.

Classroom environment research has become a popular area of study recently. As perceived by the adults of the school, i.e, the teachers and administrators, classroom climate often entails a correlation with student behavior, student achievement, and student self esteem. Perceptions of classroom climate by the students themselves can add a different perspective to the problems that arise in the classroom and the specific areas necessitating improvement. Detailed studies on classroom climate do exist although there may be fewer studies from the standpoint of the student. As school reform and education reform gain momentum and comparisons with schooling in other countries continue to be made, there will undoubtedly be more research engendered and necessitated on student perceptions and attitudes.

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Educational research has been conducted to determine the conditions for effective learning in the classroom. Alternatives to academic achievement have also been suggested as legitimate educational outcomes for students: socialization of the whole child (Wynne, 1972), humanistic quality of school life, and the development of an adequate self-concept (Wang and Stile, 1986).

Weinstein (1982) prepared a review of the literature on student perceptions of classroom environment and delineated seven categories of student perception that have been addressed. The issues in the more than 100 research studies were: (1) teachers and teacher behavior; (2) peers and peer relationships; (3) other school personnel; (4) causes of behavior (attribution theory); (5) self concept and self esteem within the classroom; (6) classroom climate and procedures; and (7) school procedures and practices. Weinstein noted the value of the studies to future educational practice and listed suggestions for further research. Investigative studies such as the systematic mapping of the student perception domain and charting developmental milestones were encouraged.

Fraser (1989) also conducted an historical review spanning twenty years of classroom climate research. He described instruments for assessing prosocial behavior and examined studies of teacher and student perceptions. Studies that employed both quantitative and qualitative methods were highlighted, as were suggested improvements to the classroom environment for teachers.

School climate was defined as "the norms, beliefs and attitudes reflected in the conditions, events and practices of a particular environment" (Kelley, 1980). In a summary of indicators of effective teaching practices, Wang (1990) identified school climate and its variables as critical to the teaching and learning process. The question of whether a learning environment can be adequately assessed has been answered through several stages. Murray (1938) first conceptualized the dual process of personal needs and environmental press. Stern (1958) extended the concept of environmental press to include "perceived climate...the study of the atmosphere of colleges and universities" (p.88). These were followed by the development of the Evening College Characteristics Index (Pace and Stern, 1961). Sinclair (1969) devised the Elementary School Environmental Survey, followed by the Classroom Environment Scale (1970) which was found to be reliable in measuring several different types of interaction that occur within a classroom (Trickett and Moos, 1970). The Learning Environment Inventory or LEI (Wahlberg, 1968) and the My Class Inventory or MCI (Anderson, 1971) have both been widely used and have proved to be both simple and convenient to use. Research regarding school climate has

developed from the study of a child's interaction with its environment, to the stage in which high-inference instruments are not available for measuring an array of variables which are felt to comprise school climate. The LEI and MCI instruments were found by Montoya (1990) to have the flexibility for measuring climate variables.

The effect of gender on student attitudes was the topic of an Israeli study by Darom and Rich (1988). Teachers' perceptions of boys' and girls' attitudes were compared with the students' own reports. Students (n=2670) in Israeli elementary, middle and high school classes reported on their general satisfaction, commitment to schoolwork and relations with teachers. Their teachers evaluated each student's attitudes for these domains. The results indicated that in most classes girls have more positive attitudes than boys and that teachers overestimate the magnitude of the difference. This may be due to the fact that behaviors that confirm expectations are more easily noticed and retrieved from memory than behavior that contradicts the stereotype (Hamilton and Gifford, 1976). The teacher-owned student behavior problems, such as hostile aggression, under-achievement and defiance, prevent the teacher from meeting his or her needs or cause teacher frustration or anger (Brophy, 1981). These kinds of behavior are more typical of boys than of girls and negatively affect teacher self-fulfillment, thus causing teachers to attribute the behaviors to students' negative attitudes towards their relations with teachers. The study confirmed that teachers perceived greater sex differences for relations with teachers than were reported by students.

Regarding school structure and its impact on student motivation and attitudes, Matthews (1991) studied eighth grade students in traditional and non-traditional (non-graded, self-selection) schools. The results showed higher levels of intrinsic motivation in academic learning for students from humanistic school settings than for boys and girls from a more structured environment.

Eccles (1991) compared student outcomes in different types of mid-grade school settings. The results of analyses using a Grade 8 cohort from the National Education Longitudinal Study (1989) served to determine whether the declines in academic motivation, self-perception and school-related behavior are characteristic of all early adolescents or are more likely true for adolescents in typical middle-grade educational settings. The study also documented an increase in teacher control and decreases in teacher efficacy and the quality of teacher-student relationships. The results confirmed that class environmental changes have a negative impact on student motivation.

Individuals are socialized by the settings in which they mature; thus the nature of the classrooms and schools affect the way students interpret their own abilities (Rosenholtz and Simpson, 1984). Students accept the intellectual status defined for them by the social structure and separate their ability from their control during schooling. This was confirmed in a study of 40 low-income teenagers (Brantlinger, 1990). The interviews with these adolescents on self-perception revealed that they tended to internalize the negative messages they received in the school setting and blamed themselves for school failure. Because they felt unintelligent, the students felt unworthy and tolerated school practices that were not personally beneficial to them and echoed the evaluations by others in their self-reports.

Good (1981) compiled a decade of research on teacher expectations and student perceptions. The highlights of this study indicated that when teachers expect students to behave in specific ways and attain certain levels of achievement, these teachers behave differently toward different students. Several ways that teachers vary their behavior are as follows:

- seating slow students farther away from the teacher, making it more difficult to monitor these students or treat them as individuals
- paying less attention to slow students, by smiling and making eye contact less often
- criticizing slower students more frequently for incorrect answers
- demanding less effort and less work from slower students
- praising slower students less often for correct or marginal responses.

As a result of these teacher behaviors, it was concluded that slower students became less willing to take risks in the classroom for volunteering answers or seeking the teacher's help. They might devote their efforts to pleasing the teacher rather than learning the subject content. Good stressed that without sufficient teacher feedback, students would be unable to evaluate how they were doing. Without sufficient contact with the students, the teacher would be less able to make appropriate changes in his or her own behavior. The differentiating behavior that teachers manifest toward students would affect and shape, over time, students' self-concepts, achievement motivation, and levels of aspiration. Good concluded that positive but appropriate teacher expectations are associated with high-achieving classrooms.

Recent research has begun to examine the critical role that students' perceptions of classroom instruction play in teaching and influencing student achievement. This research assumes that better understanding and the improvement of teaching can emerge by examining the ways that classroom instruction is viewed or interpreted by the students themselves since students ultimately

respond to what they perceive is important (Doyle, 1977; Schultz, 1979). Waxman (1989) examined urban black and Hispanic students' perceptions of classroom instruction. The results of this study indicated that black students perceived their teachers to be more effective on four instructional variables than did Hispanic students. Some of these perceptions significantly explain these students' academic achievement. Students responded on a 4-point Likert-type scale to the 40 items included in the questionnaire, OCIW or 'Our Class and Its Work' (Eash and Waxman, 1982). This instrument was developed to measure several teacher behaviors that had been found to affect student achievement (Rosenshine, 1979; Rosenshine and Furst, 1973; Waxman and Walberg, 1982) and contained the following eight scales:
(1) didactic instruction; (2) enthusiasm; (3) feedback;
(4) instructional time; (5) opportunity to learn; (6) pacing;
(7) structuring comments; (8) task orientation.
It was generally concluded that both black and Hispanic students had average to slightly above average perceptions of their teachers' classroom instruction. For blacks, the highest rated teaching behaviors were Task Orientation (M=3.03) and Enthusiasm (M=2.90), while Hispanic students rated their teachers highest on the scale of Task Orientation (M=2.96). The Task Orientation measure indicated the extent to which the classroom was "businesslike" and whether students had enough schoolwork assigned to them. Enthusiasm was the scale by which students considered the teacher to exhibit excitement and interest in teaching.
Because of the significant differences between black and Hispanic students' perceptions, it was encouraged that these differences be investigated to determine whether they might be due to actual differences in teacher instruction. It could then be suggested that policy makers examine systematically the quality of instruction in Hispanic students' classrooms and to determine appropriate instructional improvements.
Since several studies have found that teachers' expectations for Hispanic students are generally lower than that of other students (Persell, 1977; So, 1987), then possible investigation as to differential teacher expectations should be determined and solutions found to help teachers overcome their biases toward some students. If the differences in perceptions could be attributed to a lower attitude towards school by Hispanic students, then policy makers would need to investigate why this occurs and then develop more programs specifically to improve students' attitudes toward school.
The Waxman study also substantiated the importance of using student perceptions in classroom research. Several scales from the OICW instrument were found to be significant predictors of students' academic achievement. Student self-report instruments were found to hold a tremendous advantage over observational techniques in that they (a) are relatively inexpensive to

administer, (b) can be administered at a convenient or relevant time during the class, (c) can be standardized, (d) can be designed to maintain anonymity, (e) are the product of observing the prospective teacher on many occasions under normal conditions, (f) are able to pick up a wealth of data in a very short time, and (g) can be used to provide formative feedback to teachers and administrators (Fraser and Walberg, 1981; Waxman, 1984). Additional questions raised by this study include examining (a) if there is a significant relationship between student's perceptions of their classroom learning environment and general self concept; (b) if teacher characteristics such as ethnicity and teaching experience influence student perceptions; (c) whether or not Hispanic students actually receive less effective classroom instruction than other students and, if so, is that an important factor that accounts for Hispanics' generally lower academic achievement in schools (Cocking and Chipman, 1983; Ovando and Collier, 1985).

Many studies have investigated the effect of teacher behavior on student outcomes. In her literature review on classroom environment, MacAulay (1990) included studies on classroom environment from 1980 onward, with an emphasis on elementary school settings and students with behavioral deficits. She discussed the structure and organization of classrooms, the cognitive process, student and teacher characteristics, and student outcomes. The review concluded that the research has shifted from cognitive outcomes in the classroom to the teacher qualities and their effect on student outcomes.

"Effective Teaching" was the topic of a study (Labonty and Danielson, 1988) to analyze the behavior of teacher characteristics in a sample of modern picture books and to survey the perceptions of third and sixth grade children about the teacher characters. The conclusions made were that children preferred not to have as teachers those who lacked effective teaching characteristics or who exhibited negative teaching behaviors. The children's opinions were found to be gender and age consistent in that boys and girls made similar choices in selection of an effective teacher character, and that both the third and sixth graders were correlated in their ranking of the teachers. Also concluded was that there is consistency between the judgments of adults and those of students.

Coppedge and Shreck (1988) polled college and junior high school students to identify the qualities most expected and desired of the person whom they would go to for help. Both groups responded similarly to these qualities: being a good listener, being trustworthy, and displaying care or concern. The data compiled about the model helper was considered useful to teachers to improve their human relations and helping skills. Preservice and inservice education of teachers in the areas of human relations

and interpersonal communication was encouraged. Gazda expressed this view by noting that educating students in the intellectual area is only part of the job; their affective growth also needs equal consideration (Gazda, et al. 1977).

The student ratings of teachers and teacher classroom behavior was the subject of an exploratory study in gifted education (Chiang, 1991). The ratings by the gifted students was found to be reliable, valid, stable and multidimensional. The ratings were relatively unaffected by extraneous variables such as the student's age, gender, previous interest in the subject matter, and prior achievement; nor were the instructor's age, gender, or marital status considered factors in the student ratings. Teachers who received higher ratings were characterized as the Extroversion, Sensing, Thinking and Judgment types. Additional research was encouraged to determine the direction of causality between teacher personality characteristics and classroom behaviors, to generalize these findings to other student samples, and to apply the results to consultation or training programs for gifted education.

Soppe (1991) discussed a study of younger students' personality judgments of adults presented as teachers in submissive and dominant roles. The findings were that children produced more positive judgments with dominant traits being described more positively. The conclusion was that very young children can ascribe psychology characteristics after a short time.

The use of homework as a measure of teacher effectiveness was the subject of a study by Dudley and Shawver (1991). A comparison was made of student evaluations of teacher effectiveness following two approaches: classes with no homework (n=110) and classes with daily homework (n=170). Grades were higher and student evaluations of teacher effectiveness were greater in classes with daily homework assignments.

An investigation of "effective disciplinarians" was the topic of a study (Nunn, 1990) in which 543 Scottish pupils recorded their perceptions about teacher strategies for maintaining discipline. The study revealed that students perceived a wide range of effective strategies and that pupils in each school surveyed identified over seventy five percent of staff as being effective in motivating the class to work well.

An important consideration in the research of classroom environment in the effect this has on student achievement. Stockard and Mayberry (1985) compiled a review of the literature and suggested specific areas for future research. The review suggested that the learning environment can enhance individual achievement somewhat, beyond the level expected given individual background traits. This enhancement could occur through altering

the "non-cognitive" traits -- by developing an atmosphere in which students are expected and feel able to achieve. The researchers' conceptual model provides a framework to describe these influences, divided into factors of group norms and group relationships.

Montoya (1990) prepared a study on perceptions of school climate and student achievement for students in four elementary and four middle school settings. Her findings were that students perceived the school climate at essentially the same levels at both types of schools, although cohesiveness and satisfaction were rated higher by students in the middle schools. The School Climate Inventory Instrument (SCI) was employed to measure factors of the school climate such as satisfaction, friction, difficulty, competition and cohesiveness. The students' perceptions of cohesiveness and mathematics, perceptions of reading and satisfaction, and total battery scores of the California Test of Basic Skills and students' perceptions of cohesiveness were significantly and positively correlated. Since many correlation coefficients were tested and only three were significant, it was concluded that there were no linear relationships between students' perceptions of school climate and academic achievement. Montoya's recommendations were that more collaborative strategies to foster cohesiveness among students be examined for implementation, such as student government activities. Also recommended was the consideration of the middle school as a better organizational setting.

The review indicates that continued, earnest research on student attitudes and perceptions is needed to identify factors of the classroom climate that would encourage greater self concept, higher achievement, and student and teacher behaviors and their effect upon each other.

What are the attitudes of fifth and sixth grade students toward classroom climate?

Procedures

Population

The population in this study included 380 fifth and sixth grade students at the Philip Sheridan Elementary School in Chicago. The students are from low-income families in an area of depleted jobs and much gang activity. The students are African-American and Hispanic with some of the Hispanic children being recent arrivals from Spanish-speaking countries.

Sample

The sample in this study included 185 fifth and sixth grade students chosen as a cluster by classroom. Fifty of these students were in bilingual classrooms (Spanish) with a bilingual teacher.

Method of Data Collection

The Classroom Climate Checklist was administered to students in four fifth grade classes and four sixth grade classes over a two day period. A short, oral explanation was given by the researcher to the students before administration of the checklist and the checklist was collected immediately upon completion.

The findings of this study will be tabulated in terms of comparisons of frequencies of responses. The Chi Square test will be employed at the .05 level of confidence to determine the statistical significance of the findings.

Results

The sample for this study included fifth and sixth grade students at the Phil Sheridan Elementary School. Using the Chi Square (x^2) on a 2 x 3 grid, the student responses to each of the sixty items on the Classroom Climate Checklist were tabulated to determine if there was a significant difference between observed and expected proportions. Table I summarizes the statistical analysis.

Table I

Chi Square x^2 (2 x 3)

Student Attitudes

	True	False	Undecided	
Observed	96	75	14	$x^2 = 18.5$
Expected	62	62	62	

Degree of freedom = 3 - 1 = 2

According to table of values of x :

at .05 level of confidence, p = 5.991

at .01 level of confidence, p = 9.210

at .001 level of confidence, p = 13.815

Table I indicates that there is a significant difference between observed and expected proportions of student attitudes. The difference between observed and expected responses is statistically significant at the .05 level, at the .01 level and at the .001 level. The data thus leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the research hypothesis; students have a positive attitude toward classroom climate.

Classroom Climate Checklist

	Percentage of Responses		
	Yes	No	Undecided
1. students seldom study or do their work	46	45	9
2. teacher praises us	34	59	7
3. teacher seems to have favorite students	68	28	4
4. students are encouraged to ask questions	72	24	4
5. teacher calls on the same students all the time	32	64	4
6. a lot of instructional materials are used	54	41	5
7. teacher uses worksheet too much	28	68	4
8. teacher has a good sense of humor	68	27	5
9. students need to participate more in class	62	35	3
10. teacher makes subject(s) interesting	72	25	3
11. teacher is sarcastic	19	71	10
12. students are not afraid to answer questions	56	40	4
13. more students should be allowed to participate in discussions	47	49	4
14. students are not afraid of being smart	59	35	6
15. teacher needs to know us better	42	55	3
16. teacher apologizes for personal mistakes	57	39	4
17. teacher's tests are difficult to understand	39	59	2
18. students take care of bulletin boards	62	30	8
19. teacher doesn't let us make many decisions	44	52	4
20. students have a feeling of accomplishment	52	41	7
21. assignments are generally boring	42	54	4
22. students help each other to do a good job	72	26	2

	Yes	No	Undecided
23. teacher doesn't give us interesting things to do	38	57	5
24. students can work on things they like to do	51	44	5
25. teacher has little or no control over students	39	56	5
26. teacher lets us plan class activities	52	45	3
27. teacher doesn't smile much; seems grouchy	34	59	7
28. students can work together to solve problems	64	34	2
29. teacher lectures too much	45	50	5
30. teacher lets us plan some assignments	37	59	4
31. more group activities are needed	43	53	4
32. teacher makes us work hard	65	33	2
33. too many students disrupt class	57	38	5
34. teacher helps us to know each other better	55	43	2
35. teacher talks too much	44	50	6
36. teacher and students are well-organized	45	47	8
37. teacher never calls on non-volunteers	35	59	6
38. classroom is cheerful and bright	43	53	4
39. teacher's directions are seldom clear	44	52	4
40. students have a good feeling about being in this class	63	34	3
41. students don't have much respect for the teacher	53	41	6
42. students are proud of this class	48	46	6
43. students need to take things more seriously	56	41	3
44. students are not afraid to ask for help	56	38	6
45. more individual assignments are needed	27	67	6

	Yes	No	Undecided
46. classroom is neat, clean and attractive	49	49	2
47. students are jealous of each other's talents	34	61	5
48. students can move about class quietly without permission	26	71	3
49. students can leave their seats without permission	27	67	6
50. teacher shows students are understood	56	40	4
51. students and teacher waste a lot of time	36	60	4
52. students can arrange their own seating plan	16	82	2
53. teacher doesn't allow us to discuss things	35	61	4
54. teach doesn't shout at us	30	65	5
55. our lessons are not very well planned	21	73	6
56. students brag about the class outside of school	42	51	7
57. students are seldom courteous or friendly to one another	40	54	6
58. students are free to suggest ways to improve the class	47	48	5
59. students do little to prevent problems in class	45	51	4
60. teacher encourages us to discuss things in small groups	48	47	5

All items were statistically significant at the .05 level, at the .01 level, and the .001 level.

Findings of the Study

The sample instrument shows by percentage the number of responses to the sixty checklist items.

Of the three items rated as strong positive aspects of classroom climate, two are teacher-directed or teacher-caused: the teacher makes the subject(s) interesting (72% true); and students are encouraged to ask questions (72% true). A third highest-rated positive item was a reflection of the students themselves in helping each other to do a good job (72% true). Although some students rated each of the above three items as false (25%, 24%, and 26%, respectively), the three to one ratio indicates a positive perception of the classroom climate.

Teacher behavior also figured greatly in the positive responses that the teacher has a good sense of humor (68% true), and that the teacher makes students work hard (65% true).

Students rated themselves positively in response to (item 40) having a good feeling about being in their class (63% true). They also rated teachers indirectly in their responses to (item 28 and 18) since allowing students to work together to solve problems (64% true) and student's care of bulletin boards (62% true) suggest that these would be permissible under teacher direction.

Students' disagreed that they had control over their own seating arrangement (82% false) and 71% disagreed that students could move about the classroom without permission.

Sixty-eight percent of students felt that teachers did not depend too greatly on worksheets, while 67% do not agree that more individual assignments were necessary.

Two items considered as factors of a "poor climate" were negated by the student responses to these items as untrue and thus can be construed as positive aspects. These were jealousy of each other (61% untrue); and students' and teachers' waste of time (60% untrue). Similarly, item 49 which states that students can leave their seats without permission was identified in the instrument as a factor of a "poor climate"; this item was listed as untrue in 67% of the responses, thus leading to the interpretation that leaving seats without permission is an undesirable behavior and that students are complying with this classroom rule.

Data collected in this study tends to agree with the research on teacher expectations and student perceptions conducted by Good (1981). The issue of teacher's display of different behavior toward different students is supported by the response to item 3 of the Classroom Climate Checklist that the teacher seems to have favorite students (68% true).

The narrow difference in affirmative and negative responses to item 20, that students have a feeling of accomplishment (52% true, 41% false), supports the findings of Brantlinger (1990) that adolescents tended to internalize the negative messages received in the school setting and blamed themselves for school failure.

Items that relate to discipline in the classroom: teachers have little or no control over students (39% true, 56% false); and students do little to prevent problems in the class (45% true, 51% false) seem to suggest that students recognize that both teachers and students can be responsible for maintaining discipline. Further, students recognize that they need to take things (i.e., their actions, behavior, classwork, the teacher, the school) more seriously in their affirmative response to item 43 (56% true, 41% false). Investigation is warranted to determine whether those students who responded to items indicating that more discipline is necessary are students who are not behavior problems, are students who have high achievement scores, or are students whose temperament might require a less disruptive classroom setting.

Many students felt that teachers did not use enough praise (59%) but many more felt that the teacher is not sarcastic (71%). The students expressed not being afraid to answer questions (56% true), while 59% were not afraid of being smart.

Teacher tests were considered difficult to understand for 39% of the students, and 42% felt that assignments were boring. Regarding socialization, 55% do not feel that the teacher needs to know students better, while 55% agree that the teacher helps students to know each other better.

The physical conditions of the classroom were deemed cheerful and bright by 43% of students, but they were evenly divided on their perception of the classroom as neat, clean and attractive (49%).

More students (56%) felt that the teacher shows students they are understood, while 54% felt that students are courteous and friendly to one another.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study suggests that there would be validity in surveying students' perceptions as a measure of the classroom climate. The findings could then be analyzed as to areas needing immediate attention. Factors considered as contributing to discipline problems could be studied for possible correction in either student behavior or teacher behavior.

As Waxman concluded in his study of differences of perceptions of urban black and Hispanic students, there exists a need for continued research to determine whether students' perceptions of classroom climate are different for different ethnic groups. Teacher attitudes towards students of different ethnic groups also warrants study as does students' perceptions of other cultures.

An important consideration is whether or not students' attitudes correlate with teacher satisfaction. Equally important is the effect of teacher dissatisfaction upon learning achievement of students. Although this study found that students have a favorable attitude toward many factors of the classroom climate, there should be other instruments employed to more objectively identify conditions of the classroom that need improvement.

Continued research is suggested for students as they mature and progress through the grades. As noted by Berliner (1985), as children moved toward the ninth grade, the frequency of interaction with teachers diminished. This interaction had a direct influence on the students' self esteem which correlated with a negative attitude toward school and school subjects.

Of the many factors are evident in the classroom that influence the climate, research is required so that factors influencing student achievement, student behavior, self esteem and self concept are identified, and possible solutions are suggested for improvement.
Certainly as student bodies change, more multicultural groups are now evident in many classrooms, research is required to identify if different learning patterns exist among ethnic groups, and also the home and family influences upon students' attitude.

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